

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A method of configuring a computer for installation of a peripheral device, the method comprising:

preparing a print server to retrieve a first device identification from a memory of the peripheral device, the print server, the peripheral device, and the computer being connected via a computer network;

comparing the first device identification to device names on a list of names associated with device drivers, the list and the drivers being stored in a memory of the computer; and

selecting for use an associated driver if the first device identification matches one of the names.

2. A method according to claim 1 further comprising:

translating the first device identification into at least a second device identification if the first device identification does not match one of the names;

comparing the at least second device identification to the device names; and

selecting a driver from the list if the at least second device identification matches one of the names.

3. A method according to claim 2 further comprising:

determining whether the peripheral device requires special measures in order to install the selected device driver;

identifying an appropriate special measure from a database of potential special measures stored in a memory of the print server; and

informing a user of the appropriate special measure.

4. A method according to claim 2 further comprising alerting a user if the second device identification does not match one of the names.

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5. A method according to claim 1 wherein the peripheral device is a printer.

6. A method according to claim 1 wherein the computer network is compatible with the Microsoft® Windows® Operating System.

7. A method according to claim 2 wherein the device identifications conform to an IEEE 1284 signaling standard.

8. A method according to claim 7 wherein the first device identification includes at least manufacturer and model key values.

9. A method according to claim 7 wherein the first device identification includes a compatibility identification key field.

10. A method according to claim 1 wherein the selecting occurs automatically.

11. A method according to claim 2 wherein the translating includes a database look-up.

12. A method according to claim 8 wherein the translating includes a database look-up using alternate names and key values.

13. A method according to claim 8 wherein the translating includes concatenating the manufacturer and model key values.

14. A method according to claim 8 wherein translating further includes removing the manufacturer key value.

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15. An apparatus comprising:  
a computer network including a number of computer devices connected thereto, the computer devices including a print server, a computer, and at least one printer;  
a memory in the at least one printer for storing a first printer identification data string; and  
a processor associated with the computer including (i) a comparator for comparing the first data string to a device name on a list of device drivers stored in a memory of the computer, and (ii) a selector selecting a driver from the list if the first identification data string matches one of the names.

16. An apparatus according to claim 15, further comprising:  
a translator translating the first identification data string into at least a second identification data string if the first identification data string does not match one of the names;  
wherein the comparator compares the at least second identification data string to the device names and the selector selects a driver from the list if the at least second identification data string matches one of the names.

17. An apparatus according to claim 16, further comprising:  
a determination mechanism for determining whether the printer requires special measures in order to install the selected device driver;  
a database stored in a computer memory of the print server and including a number of special measures;  
wherein the determination mechanism identifies an appropriate special measure from among the number of special measures; and

an informing mechanism for informing a user of the appropriate special measure.

18. An apparatus according to claim 16, further comprising:  
an alerting mechanism for alerting a user if the second identification data string does not match one of the names.

19. An apparatus according to claim 15 wherein the computer network is compatible with the Microsoft® Windows® Operating System.

20. An apparatus according to claim 16 wherein the device identification strings conform to an IEEE 1284 signaling standard.

21. An apparatus according to claim 20 wherein the first device identification data string includes at least manufacturer and model key values.

22. An apparatus according to claim 16 wherein the translator searches a database.

23. An apparatus according to claim 20 wherein the translator searches a database and uses alternate key values.

24. An apparatus according to claim 20 wherein the identification string includes a compatibility identification key value.

25. An apparatus according to claim 21 wherein the translator concatenates the manufacturer and model key values.

26. An apparatus according to claim 25 wherein the translator removes the manufacturer key value from the identification data string.

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27. A method of installing printer drivers in a computer of a computer system, the computer system also including a printer and a print server, the computer, the printer, and the print server being connected via a computer network, the method comprising:

preparing the print server to determine if a current installation of the printer drivers is a first installation of the printer drivers;

installing the printer drivers in the computer if the current installation is the first installation and storing information associated with the current installation in a memory of the print server;

retrieving information associated with the first installation from the memory if the current installation is not the first installation, the information associated with the first installation including a first identification data string;

retrieving a current identification data string from a memory of the printer, the current identification data string being associated with the current installation;

comparing the first data string with the current data string; and  
installing the printer drivers in the computer based upon the information associated with the first installation if the first data string matches the current data string.

28. A method according to claim 27 further comprising installing the printer drivers in the computer if the first data string does not match the current data string and storing information associated with the installing, when the first data string does not match the current identification string, in the memory of the print server.

29. A method according to claim 27 wherein the first and current data strings are IEEE 1284 ID data strings.

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30. An article of manufacture comprising a machine-readable medium having recorded thereon instructions, such that when the instructions are read into a memory of a computer processor and executed, the instructions cause the computer processor to:

retrieve a first device identification from a memory of a peripheral device, the computer processor, the peripheral device, and a computer being connected via a computer network;

compare the first device identification to device names on a list of names associated with device drivers, the list stored in a memory of the computer; and

select for use an associated driver from the list if the first device identification matches one of the names.